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ABSTRACT

A study investigated effects of a parent volunteer program--a component of the Summer Reading Program of the University of Maryland at College Park--upon children's self-perceptions as readers and their motivation to read. Subjects were 10 students in grades 4 or 6 who were identified as achieving below grade level and who were low motivated readers, and 13 parents of the children. Students were provided instruction on a group basis by 2 clinicians for 3 hours a day, 3 days a week, for 5 weeks. Volunteer parents assisted the students to improve their reading, either on a group basis or an individual basis. Students were administered the Reader Self-Perception Scale as a pretest and posttest. Parents and 2 teachers completed questionnaires. Results indicated that by the end of the program, the students (1) had more confidence in their capacities and self-efficacy of being a reader; (2) were more motivated to read; and (3) voluntarily got involved in literacy activities. Findings suggest that parent involvement had an impact upon increments of students' self-perception as a reader and writer. (Contains 41 references and 3 tables of data. An appendix presents an interview protocol.) (RS)

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Effects of the Parent Volunteer Program upon Students' Self-Perception as a Reader

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Effects of the Parent Volunteer Program upon Students' Self-Perception as a Reader

Self-perception impacts on children's academic achievement, especially reading achievement (Alvermann & Guthrie, 1993; Deeds, 1981). It has been established that self-perception influences an individual's overall orientation towards the processes of reading. When children perceive themselves to be able readers, they may apply effective strategies during reading, cope with difficulties persistently, and remain engaged in constructing meaning and doing problem solving (Castle, 1994; Henk & Melnick, 1995). In contrast, children who doubt their own reading capacities are likely to manifest a poor self-image by approaching a difficult task as a threat to be avoided rather than a challenge (Bandura, 1989; Vacca & Vacca, 1996). They may give up easily and easily become frustrated during reading. In addition, these readers generally dwell on their deficiencies, and approach a reading situation without a sense of purpose and fail to monitor reading activities (Johnston, & Winograd, 1985). The readers then attempt to either avoid reading or procrastinate during reading (Vacca & Vacca, 1996; Vacca & Padak, 1990). Needless to say, self-perception is important to reading effort and achievement.

Self-image contributes to students' ability to read. Deeds (1981) emphasized that reading teachers must firmly believe in the important role self-perception plays in the processes of learning to read if they are to promote students' reading success. Yet an obvious question most teachers often ask is how they can promote their students' self-perception. One of the approaches is getting parents involved in school business such as getting them help in the classroom, reinforcing reading and writing at home and involving decision-making of classroom issues. Research demonstrated that parental involvement benefits students (Olmsted, 1991) and contributes to enhance students' self-esteem and academic achievement in school (Solomon, 1991).

This paper will proceed as follows. First, a considerable body of research concerning self-perception and parental involvement will be reviewed. Second, the study conducted at a reading clinic of the University of Maryland, College Park with a purpose to examine effects of parental involvement upon students' self-perception as readers will be discussed.

Concepts of Self-Perception

Concepts of self-perception often are unclear to many people. Within the considerable body of literature on self-perception, terms such as self-concept (Quandt,

1972), and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977a) have been used interchangeably with self-perception (Goldenson, 1984). Throughout this study I will refer to the term self-perception in a generic way that includes the aspects of self-concept and self-efficacy as well.

The term self-concept refers to all the perception that an individual has of himself or herself in the aspects of his or her value and ability (Quandt, 1972). Quandt (1972) also explicated two aspects of self-concepts:

(1) The perceptions of self that an individual has include a view of himself as compared to others, self view of how one is seen by others, and self view of how one wishes to be.

(2) The perceptions of self that an individual has are largely based upon the experiences that one has had with those people who are important to him. Thus, such people can effect change in the individuals' self-concept (p.2).

Bandura (1977a) defined self-efficacy as the individual's judgment of how well one can organize and implement actions in a specific situation which may contain ambiguous, unpredictable, and stressful elements. Researchers such as Wigfield and Karpathian (1991) also explained self-efficacy as knowledge structures about self that

organize individuals' interpretations of their experiences and guide their behaviors. Self-perception is defined as "awareness of the various components that constitute the self, that is, one's unique feelings, impulses, aspirations and personality characteristics" (Goldenson, 1984, p.664).

Self-perception, self-concept or self-efficacy is hypothesized to have an impact upon the choices of activities, effort expenditure, perseverance in the face of difficulties and expectations of eventual success (Bandura, 1977b; Bandura & Schunk, 1981). For instance, individuals tend to determine their capacity for performing in a given situation and then form their expectation of success or failure, this in turn affects future achievement-oriented behavior (Weiner et al., 1971). When individuals have low assurance in their competence that they will be able to accomplish a task, they tend to become fearful and stressed, and attempt to avoid the task they believe exceeds their coping capacity. In contrast, when individuals judge that they are capable of handling a situation, they become highly involved in the activities and apply strategies to help them troubleshot the potential problems in performing the task. Despite the difficulties, individuals who perceive potential success are inclined to persist in the face of setbacks and exert more efforts in order to reach the expected goals. This hypothesis

is supported by Bandura's (1989) research on self-efficacy. His study indicated that learners with high perception of their own capacities tend to try harder, continue in the face of obstacles and succeed more often than those who have negative self-perception of their ability to perform a specific task.

Informational Sources of Self-Perception

Bandura (1977a, 1981) postulated that in order to perceive their own self-perception, individuals acquire information from four major sources: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and physiological arousal. First, experiencing success raises individuals' self-efficacy; on the other hand, encountering failure lowers self-efficacy. Surprisingly, once individuals' self-efficacy is enhanced, there is a tendency to generalize a sense of success to similar situations. When individuals believe that success is possible due to their own abilities, they will attempt similar endeavors in similar tasks (Weiner, 1972, 1979; Weiner et al., 1971). The second source of information that individuals use to make self-perception judgments is individuals' observation of their peer attaining success at a task. When individuals see their peers perform and accomplish a task without adverse consequence, this seems to convey an almost vicarious sense of positive efficacy that

they can accomplish the task as well. Ruble (1983) revealed that children obtain information about various aspects of their own efficacy from peers. She also asserted that children cannot accurately evaluate their performance except in relationship to how others have done (Ruble, 1983). Ruble's (1983) study involved children at different grade levels (kindergarten, second and fourth grades) playing a ball-throwing game and receiving information concerning the outcomes of their own performance and outcomes of peers. The subjects were asked to predict how well they could perform on the task. The study aimed to investigate the salience and accuracy of information obtained from social comparison compared to that of information obtained from their own performance in order to make accurate self-appraisal. This study showed that the social-comparison information impacts on the accuracy of children's self-evaluation. Verbal persuasion is the third source of information about individuals' self-perception. People are led to believe that they are capable of succeeding at a particular task by a trustworthy source such as parents and teachers. Obtaining warm encouragement especially from credible persuaders could help individuals to perceive their capacity and make them confident in their competence to deal with a particular task. Finally, individuals acquire information about their efficacy from observing their physiological

states. Such physiological cues as depression, anxiety, fatigue, sweating and trembling may signal individuals of probable failure.

Self-Perception and Motivation

Bandura (1989), a self-efficacy theorist, proposed that self-efficacy or self-perception is converted into a motivator or a regulator of behaviors. In cognitive processes, prior to doing a task, people guide their actions through the exercise of forethought. They anticipate outcomes of prospective actions, set goals or self-established standard of performance (1977a) and plan courses of actions.

People who have a high sense of their self-efficacy would visualize success scenarios that provide them positive guides for performance and solutions to potential problems (Bandura, 1989). These people would also establish their standards of present performance, based on their prior experience of success and previous standard of performance. As a whole, when individuals achieve a specific task, it leads to setting higher standards by comparing with their past performance.

During performing a particular task, if an established standard is reached at a satisfactory level, the anticipated satisfaction will lead individuals to sustained involvement until the performance matches or exceeds the standard (Schunk, 1983b).

In other words, individuals will be motivated to focus on a task and persist much longer in the task despite encountering difficulties and setbacks.

After reaching the self-established standards of performance, individuals consume their self-satisfaction and perceive their new self-efficacy, which has been adjusted. Their self-established standards for a particular task is inclined to be set higher and higher. This reinforces and motivates individuals to concentrate and persist in the task in order to reach higher established standards. It might say that individuals who perceive themselves as high in competence are likely to have high motivation.

Parent Involvement, Self-Perception and Motivation

Concepts of parent involvement seem to be varied. Parent involvement can mean parents serving as councils and committees to make decisions about school-related issues, contributing to curriculum development, assisting small groups of children to read and write, helping children to select appropriate literature in the library, and discussing their own careers and experiences (Swap, 1993). Ascher (1988) extends concepts of parent involvement to holding meetings or workshops for parents in order to assist them to be able to work with their children and teachers effectively.

Studies have shown that parent involvement has a significantly positive effect upon children's achievement in school. An example of these studies verifying a positive consequence of the parent involvement is Trovato and Bucher's (1980). This study reports the utility of involving parents as reinforcers of their children's learning in a peer tutoring program for reading remediation. Children were assigned to a control group, a peer tutoring group or a peer tutoring group with parent involvement. Researchers found that children in the last group, which school contacted parents by telephone or letter to inform them about their children's progress, performed better on the Stanford Reading Achievement Test than did the control group.

Parent involvement have positive impacts upon not only children's academic achievement, as discussed earlier, but also their self-perception and motivation, which are the main focus of this study. In considering Bandura's major sources of children's self-efficacy, credible people around the children, such as parents, teachers and friends, impact upon the children's enhanced self-efficacy. Researchers, for instance, Brookover and Thomas (1964), Deeds (1981), Altman and Chemers (1980), Harter (1986) and Quandt (1972) advocated this hypothetical statement. In her study of adults who were former disabled readers, Cecil (1989) found that when parents became anxious about

disabled readers' problems and regarded them as incompetent, they exacerbated the situation, slowing disabled readers' progress and seriously affecting the readers' self-perceptions. Bandura (1975) explained reasons why such people as parents, teachers or peers influence children's everyday learning and self-efficacy in his theory of modeling processes. First, parents or teachers have one or more of the following characteristics. They may be prestigious, appear to deserve trust, portray consensus in a group, offer believable standards to guide children's aspirations, or provide realistic reference figures for children comparison (Rosenthal & Bandura, 1978, p. 636). Second, characteristics of the children themselves make them likely to be influenced by their models (Bandura, 1975). Those children are likely to lack self-confidence and have low self-esteem. Thus, they will adjust their behaviors to those of successful models. Finally, characteristics and functional value of the behaviors such as reading and writing habits is established through reinforcement to the models (Bandura, 1975). When children see that such behaviors are successful for the models, they are prone to perceive and accurately record in memory a visual image or semantic code for the act they have witnessed (1975). The way of learning that children observe behaviors from trustworthy people like parent volunteers who are regarded as a model, and acquire

symbolic representation of the models' behaviors is coined "observational learning" (Bandura, 1975). After acquiring symbolic representation of the model's behavior, children will store the representation in their memory and retrieve it later to guide their behaviors (Shaffer, 1996).

Besides learning from the models, children can acquire information about their capabilities from how other people perform (Schunk, 1991). Trustworthy models such as parent volunteers are important sources of vicarious efficacy information. When children observe parent volunteers succeed, the observation can convey information to them that they should be able to perform the task successfully as well. Thus they will be motivated to attempt the task. Relich and her colleagues' study (1986) demonstrated the benefits of observing models on efficacy and motivation. When low-achieving children are exposed to models explaining mathematical division, those children's motivation and self-efficacy were increased. While observing and working with the model, children also receive not only vicarious efficacy information but persuasory information (Schunk, 1991). The models might provide children with positive feedback, compliment and encouragement. This persuasory information can lead children to believe that they can accomplish the task and then persist in doing the task. Bandura

(1986), Weiner (1979) and Schunk (1991) assert that positive persuasory feedback for children's previous success supports children's perception of their progress, sustain motivation and increase efficacy for learning.

The purpose of this study was to investigate effects of a parent volunteer program—a component of the Summer Reading Program of the University of Maryland at College Park—upon children's self-perception as a reader and motivation to read. The study was guided based on the following questions:

1. Does the parent volunteer program influence students' self-perception as a reader?

2. Does the parent volunteer program influence students' motivation to read?

Methods

Participants

Students: Ten students attending in a class of the Summer Reading Program (SRP) of the University of Maryland in 1996 participated in the study. This class consisted of four fourth graders, and six sixth graders. Prior to entering the SRP, these students were screened to identify their strengths, interests and needs in reading.

They were administered both formal and informal assessments. Based on the Burns/ Roe Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) results, the students' capacity to identify words was ranging from the preprimer level to the third grade level. The ranges of their oral reading capacity were: PP-3 at the independent level; PP-4 at the instructional level; and PP-5 at the frustration level. The children could read silently and comprehend at the independent level on the first to second grade texts, at the instructional level on the preprimer to fourth grade texts, and at the frustration level on the primer to fourth grade texts. Their listening comprehension levels were ranging from the primer grade to the fifth grade. Moreover, most of the students were identified as low motivated readers.

Parents: Thirteen parents of the children attending in the 1996 SRP participated in the parent volunteer program. They were from different socioeconomic backgrounds and races. Each volunteer parent in the sample endorsed to voluntarily participate in the program. The frequency of attending the program of each parent was varied. Some parents attended to the program three times a week, but some participated in the program just once for a five-week period of the program.

Instruments

The Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) The RSPS created by Henk and Melnick (1995) was used to measure how intermediate-level children feel about themselves as a reader. It consists of 33 items and uses a 5-point Likert-type response scale (5=Strongly agree and 1=Strongly disagree). This survey assesses four specific dimensions of self-perception: progress (9 items), observational comparison (6 items), social feedback (9 items) and physiological states (8 items), including an item asking overall self-perceived competence. Thirty-two items in the four specific dimensions are developed based on Bandura's four major sources of information that children use to make judgments about their self-perception (1977a, 1981). The overall reliability estimates of the RSPS are acceptable, ranging from .81 to .84 (Henk & Melnick, 1992).

My Child as a Reader (MCR) A questionnaire was developed to elicit the parents' insights about their own child as a reader, as well as to tap their perception of their child's literacy activities at home, which could imply their child's motivation to read. Items used to elicit information about self-perception and motivation were developed on the basis of self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977a, 1981) and concepts of identification of mastery motivation (Bandura, 1989, Foertsch, 1992, Weiner, 1979,

Wigfield & Karpathian, 1991, Jennings, 1991), for instance, becoming involved in literacy activities, manipulating their focus on tasks, sustaining their behaviors and persisting in their task when confronted with setbacks.

The questionnaire consists of two parts. In the first part, parents considered three statements pertaining to their child's literacy activities at home and chose an appropriate response provided. Their responses could assist us to understand the degree of their child's motivation to read. Then, using a 1-4 Likert Scale (1=Never and 4=often), in the second part of the questionnaire parents judged 9 statements about changes in their child's reading behaviors from the beginning until the last day of the program. There was also an open-ended question asking parents to provide their additional comments about changes in their child's reading behaviors.

Items in the second part of the MCR could also assist to better understand a child's self-perception and motivation to read, reflecting from his/her parent's perspective. These items are divided into 3 categories: progress (PR), physiological states (PS) and motivation (MO). The progress category (items 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9) could assist us to see a child's present reading performance on the last day of the program compared with his/her past performance prior to attending to the program. The

physiological states category (items 2, 6 and 7) could help us to understand a child's internal feelings and reaction to reading, which he/she experienced during reading. In addition, items 2, 3 and 9 in the second part also tap information about a child's changes in reading behaviors, which infer his/her enhanced motivation to read.

The Child as a Reader (CR) The Child as a Reader (CR) was developed to tap the teachers' perception about their students as a reader as well as students' motivation to read. Items used to elicit information about self-perception and motivation were developed on the basis of self-efficacy theory and concepts of identification of mastery motivation. These items on the CR are consistent with those on the My Child as a Reader (MCR). The consistency between the items on the CR and the MCR not only assist us to obtain the same information about the child's self-perception and motivation from different perspectives but also verify the consistency of the information obtained.

Using a 1-4 Likert Scale (1=Never and 4=Often), teachers judged 8 statements about changes in their students' reading behaviors from the beginning until the last day of the program. There were an open-ended question asking teachers to provide their insights or comments about changes in their students' reading behaviors.

Items on the CR could reflect changes in the children's reading behaviors in lights of self-perception and motivation to read from teachers' perspectives. These items are divided into 3 categories the same as the MCR: progress (items 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8), physiological states (items1, 4 and 5) and motivation (items 1, 2 and 7).

Interview Protocol. The interview protocol consists of 4 questions developed from aspects derived from Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) and social learning theory (1975). (See Appendix A for the complete interview protocol). The questions used in the interview were used to elicit the parent volunteers' perception of students' self-perception as readers and motivation to read, including their own contributions to the enhancement of students' self-perception.

Procedures

The students were provided instruction in reading on a group basis by two clinicians, who were graduate students taking either one or two courses in clinical experiences in working with children having difficulty learning to read at the University of Maryland, College Park. The instruction lasted 3 hours in the morning from Monday through Wednesday for approximately 5 weeks.

In addition to receiving classroom instruction, the students experienced working

with volunteer parents, who voluntarily assisted the students to improve their reading, either on a group basis or an individual basis. These volunteer parents assisted children to learn to read, read with students, helped them with word identification and comprehension, helped students with their projects and even helped the clinicians to display students' work on bulletin boards.

Some of the volunteer parents modeled how to be a good reader or writer. For instance, a parent demonstrated writing process, assisting a student to brainstorm his idea, asking their questions to elicit their ideas and putting their ideas down on the paper. Afterwards, the parent provided the student with her suggestion and asked him to revise drafts.

> "Sometimes when they (students) are going to begin the project, I could go ahead and ask them a question to get an idea of what to write about or how to respond, not depend on my idea, but by asking them a question."

The volunteer parents also provided students with persuasory information and warm encouragement which informed the students and made them believe that they possessed the capabilities to perform a task. They made the students to expend more effort to continue performing the task.

"I used to say that you are doing a good job. And if they are stumble over their work, I try to help to sum it out and go back to reread and figure out where the problem is" (Parent I).

"I tried to encourage and reinforce them ... I provided guidance to them, gave them approval of their work and showed my appreciation upon their interesting work and some of the ideas I like. I congratulated them and encouraged them to continue to do" (Parent II).

At the third week of instruction, the clinicians called parents to discuss their child's progress, strengths and weaknesses. The clinicians also informed the parents of what they had done with their child, and responded to the parents' questions of what the parents could do to strengthen and improve their child's reading capacity, including clarifying their concerns.

Students were administered the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS) as a pretest and a posttest at the first and the last weeks of the instructions. Also, the My Child as a Reader questionnaire (MCR) was distributed to students' parents during the last week of the program. Then, the questionnaire was returned when completed by the parents. The Child as a Reader questionnaire (CR) was also given to two teachers

to complete and return during the last week of the program.

Results

Table I

Means and Standard Deviations for Reader Self-Perception Scale

Components of RSPS	Pretest		Posttest	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
General Perception	3.4	.97	3.8	.42
Progress	38.8	2.7	41.4	3.3
Observational Comparison	17.5	4.1	21.3	4.5
Social Feedback	32.7	3.5	34.2	4.8
Physiological States	25.7	7.4	27.3	7.7

To consider the first question, "Does the parent volunteer program influence students' self-perception as a reader?", means and standard deviations of both a pretest and a posttest are presented for all components of the RSPS in Table I. For each component, t-tests for pairs were implemented with Type I error rate of .05 in order to determine significance of paired differences mean between the pretest and the posttest. The results show that there were significant differences between the means of the

pretest and those of the posttest for the following components of the RSPS: progress [M=38.8, SD=2.7; M=41.4, SD=3.3, respectively; t(9)= -2.44, p<.05], and observational comparison [M=17.5, SD=4.1; M=21.3, SD=4.5, respectively; t(9)= -5.88, p<.01]. Yet the means of the pretest did not differ from those of the posttest in the following components: general perception [M=3.4, SD=.97; M=3.8, SD=.42, respectively; t(9)= -1.31, p>.05], social feedback [M=32.7, SD=3.5; M=34.2, SD=4.8, respectively; t(9)= -.96, p>.05], and physiological states [M=25.7, SD=7.4; M=27.3, SD=7.7, respectively; t(9)= -1.12; p>.05].

Table II

Comparison between Components of My Child as a Reader and the Child as a Reader from Parents' and Teachers' Perspectives

The MCR and CR components	Parents' Perspective		Teachers' Perspective	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Progress (PR)	18.17	1.72	13.17	3.19
Physiological States (PS)	7.67	2.07	8.67	1.86
Motivation (MO)	9.50	1.05	8.83	2.40

Table II exhibits means and standard deviation of the MCR and those of the CR,

which reflect children's self-perception as a reader from their parents' perspective and teachers' perspective, respectively. Five out of ten of the MCR questionnaires were returned by the parents. The means of each component on the MCR and the CR—progress, physiological states and motivation--were relatively high.

Table III

Correlation between Parents' Perspective and Teachers Perspective of the Children's Self-Perception

Parent / Teacher	1. PR	2. PS	3. MO
1. Progress (PR)	-.37	--	--
2. Physiological States (PS)	--	.35	--
3. Motivation (MO)	--	--	-.24

Table III shows the correlation between the means of the parents' perspective and those of the teachers' perspective on each component of the questionnaire, asking about children's self-perception and motivation. It appears that we cannot reject the null hypothesis that there is no linear association between the means of all components in the MCR which reflect parents' perspective and those in the CR which reflect

teachers' perspective. It is possible that the returning rate of questionnaires from the parents was relatively low, as opposed to that from the teachers as well as the number of participants in the study was very small. Therefore, they might affect the power of the test which make us unable to reject the null hypothesis and cause the degree of the correlation between the two instruments—the MCR and the CR—was relatively low. However, it does not mean that parents' perception and teachers' perception of children' increased self-perception was inconsistent. In table II, the means of both parents' perspective and teachers' perspective in all components are relatively high, and the differences between the means of the parents' perspective and the teachers' perspective in the PS and MO components are very little, except the PR component.

Another two pieces of information inferring increment of students' self-perception as a reader are students' interest and performance of visiting the library and their time spent on reading at home. Based on 6 MCR forms returned, the number of times which students visited the library in the five-week period during the program were ranging from 0-3. Parents' responses on the MCR also demonstrated that these children read more at home. They spent at least 6 hours reading during the five-week period.

Although the statistical measure of the students' self-perception—the RSPS—did not explicitly display significant gains due to the parent volunteer program, the degree of each student's self-perception had a tendency to increase. Changes in the students' reading performance, for instance, spending more time reading for pleasure, and visiting the library to check out books, verify that these students have more confidence in their capacities and self-efficacy of being a reader. Moreover, the parents' and the teachers' impressive comments about their children's changes in reading behaviors on the MCR and the CR respectively strongly corroborate the increment of students' self-perception. Examples of these comments are:

"John demonstrates more self-confidence in his reading abilities (Parent).

Thelma was more willing to share information about books (Teacher).

By the end of the program, Karen appeared more enthusiastic about reading and sharing ideas (Teacher)."

In response to the second question, "Does the parent volunteer program influence students' motivation to read?," students' changes in reading behaviors during the five-week period of the program, for instance, the number of hours spent reading,

the number of times that the students visited the library, were taken into account.

Responses on the MCR implicitly indicate that the students were more motivated to read. If we ponder closely on items 2, 3 and 9 pertaining to children's tendency to get involved in independent reading, ninety percent of the parents' responses expresses the children's enhancement of involvement in independent reading activities. The children seemed more interested in reading, talking about books and magazines and sharing their feelings about books they read. This result is consistent with that obtained from the CR questionnaire which reflects the teachers' perspective. That is, approximately seventy percent of the teachers' responses also expresses the children's increment of their motivation to read. Moreover, eighty percent of the parents reported that their children chose to go to the library, visiting at least 1 time for a two-month period.

Another evidence of changes in reading behaviors which signals our students' enhanced motivation to read is the number of hours that students spent reading and their persistence in reading. Eighty percent of the responses on the MCR shows that the children spent at least six hours reading at home within a month. More interestingly, a hundred percent of the parents returning the MCR questionnaire

stated that their children read for pleasure continuously for 25 minutes or more, but thirty-three percent reported that their children read for pleasure continuously for 25 minutes or more quite often.

We can infer from these results that the parent volunteer program had an impact upon the students' increments of motivation to read. The students voluntarily got involved in literacy activities, for instance, visiting the library, and reading more for pleasure. One of the parents' comments impressively portrayed her child's changes in reading behaviors.

"My son has developed an interest in reading. That in itself is an improvement."

Another parent reported that her child read a lot more and found reading is challenging. These comments could corroborate that the students are more motivated to read.

In addition to becoming involved in literacy activities independently, the consequences on the MCR have revealed that the students exerted more effort to interact in sophisticated manners with reading tasks such as concentrating while reading, and persisting in their task attempts despite experiencing failures. These are all considered that the students are more motivated to read.

The comments obtained from an interview with two parent volunteers strongly support the result that the students independently chose to be involved in literacy activities.

> "They (students) like what they are doing very much. They are very interested in continuing doing it (project).... That amount of effort put in the work is what can see as an evidence for motivation. They put a lot of effort on what they want to continue."

Discussion

The findings of this study, taken place in the Summer Reading Program, ascertain that parent involvement has an impact upon increments of students' self-perception as a reader and motivation to read. To the students, those parent volunteers appeared to be a model of good reader and writer inasmuch as they appeared to have attributes of the good model, for instance, appearing to deserve trust, offering believable standards to guide students' aspirations and so forth, as described by Bandura (1975). In addition to regarding as a good model, the parent volunteers are believed to be a trustworthy source to provide the students with credible information reflecting the students' capabilities and offer them positively persuasory information to

increase their confidence and motivation to persist in doing the task despite the difficulties. Those parents could demonstrate to students how good readers and writers do and provide some good techniques to tackle with tasks. The students consequently are armed with strategies to handle the tasks. It leads them to heighten their self-perception and motivation to read.

In addition, the parent volunteers can also assist the students to establish their goals of doing a task. It will draw the students' focused attention to work on the task in order to attain it. The students will obtain both positive attributional feedback of their progress, compliment when achieving the established goals, and warm encouragement when encountering setbacks. Then these would get the students engaged in the activities which they believe they will lead to goal attainment (Schunk, 1991), expend much effort and persist in doing the task. In other words, that parent volunteers provide students with feedback on goal progress (Elliott & Dweck, 1988; Schunk, 1991), compliment for the students' effort (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1984) and encouragement (Schunk, 1991) could raise students' self-perception and sustain their motivation to perform their reading and writing.

When parents get involved in schools, it seems that they implicitly send an important message to children including their own child that they, other than teachers, really care about the children's success. Both parents and teachers share what they see about children's strengths, weaknesses, interests, attitudes and progress and cooperatively plan instructions that are meaningful to the children. Moreover, they establish an expectancy of positive outcomes and assist the children to experience success. If the children encounter difficulties or failure in reading, parents and teachers can confer with them, listen to the children's feelings (Castle, 1994), help them clarify their perceptions, and provide effort attributional feedback to encourage them to try harder (Schunk, 1983a, 1984). These were what the parents in the 1996 SRP got involved in and what the parents and the clinicians demonstrated to the children that they cared about them. Consequently, the children in turn realized to care about themselves, felt more confident about their reading capacities, exerted more efforts on their reading despite facing setbacks, and were motivated to read.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

1. Do you think your work as a volunteer contributed to the children's literacy (reading, writing, etc.) improvement? How? What makes you think that?
2. Do you think your work as a volunteer helped to increase the children's self-perception as readers? How?
3. Do you think your work as a volunteer helped to increase the children's motivation to read? How?
4. What are your contributions to make children believe they are good readers?